

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-10

SSM-05 DHA-02 ORM-02 /096 W

-----130337Z 024926 /71

R 121518Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1287

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

/USIA WASHDC 1286

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 00244

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 12

1. SYRIAN MEDIA LED WITH VARIOUS STORIES ALL EXTOLLING SYRIA'S CURRENT ROLE IN THE AREA. PRESS HEADLINED FONMIN FAHMI'S POLICY STATEMENT IN CAIRO LAUDING EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN UNITY; ALSO, "COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS IN LEBANON TO BE COMPLETED BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT;" AND "SYRIAN ACTION HAS PREVENTED CONTINUATION OF STAGNATION IN ME."

2. PROMINENT FRONT PAGE COVERAGE GIVEN COLLECTION HEAVY WEAPONS IN LEBANON AND SARKIS'S MEETINGS WITH VARIOUS LEBANESE FAITIONS. STATEMENT RADIO BEIRUT PUBLISHED
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CLAIMING LISTS OF ALL HEAVY WEAPONS HAD BEEN TURNED OVER TO ARAB DETERRENT FORCES AND THAT COLLECTION OF ALL SUCH WEAPONS WOULD BE COMPLETED BY MIDNIGHT JAN. 12. ARTICLE NOTED MEETINGS SARKIS HELD YESTERDAY WITH LEBANESE INDEPENDENT NASSERITES AND STATEMENT OF NASSERITE KAMAL SHATILA AFTER MEETING RE DETERMINATION OF SARKIS TO ELIMINATE HEAVY ARMS. EDITORIAL ON SAME THEME

LAUDED EFFORTS OF SARKIS, AND GAVE CREDIT FOR COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS WITHIN "DESIGNATED PERIOD" TO HIM. COLUMNIST CLAIMED SARKIS BUILDING NEW LEBANON "BASED ON EQUALITY AND JUSTICE, REMOVED FROM POLITICAL FANATICISM AND CONFESSIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL FRICTION." EDITORIAL ENDED BY DECLARING THAT COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS IS CRUCIAL FOR DETERRENCE AND IS NECESSARY NOT ONLY FOR LEBANON'S SAFETY BUT FOR THAT OF ENTIRE ARAB WORLD. SECOND ARTICLE PROCLAIMED THAT CITIZENS OF THE CHOUF HAD WELCOMED ENTRY OF ADF. LEBANESE DEPUTY "IWAYDAT (PHON) PRAISED SYRIAN INTERVENTION AS HAVING SAVED LEBANON.

3. MEDIA GAVE FEW DETAILS ON CONVENING PALESTINIAN CENTRAL COUNCIL UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF FAHUM EVENING JAN. 11 WITH ARAFAT ALSO ATTENDING. JANUARY 12 AFTERNOON NEWS REPORTED, HOWEVER, THAT ANOTHER MEETING OF CENTRAL COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN DAMASCUS ON JAN. 22.

4. INFORMATION MINISTER AHMAD ISKADAR AHMAD'S INTERVIEW WITH KUWAITI DAILY AL-SIYASSAH GIVEN WIDE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE. AHMAD AFFIRMED THAT SYRO-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT COMPLEMENTS SYRO-JORDANIAN TIES. HE STRESSED MAINTENANCE OF MILITARY OPTION AS NECESSITY FOR POLITICAL "STRUGGLE," AND PROPOUNDED ON NEED FOR ARAB UNITY EQUIVALENT TO THAT EXISTING DURING OCTOBER WAR AS MEANS FOR ACHIEVING POLITICAL GOALS.

5. RELEASE OF ABU DAUD WAS GIVEN MODEST FRONT PAGE COVERAGE BUT NO GREAT FANFARE. ARTICLE STATED THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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"OBSERVERS" WERE "ASTONISHED AT TONE OF AMERICAN REACTION."

6. COLUMN IN TISHRIIN MADE CASE FOR ATTENDING GENEVA CONFERENCE. IT ASSERTED THAT ARABS HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE SINCE CONFERENCE WILL BE CONVENED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUSLY ACCEPTED SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 WHICH "CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AND THE SOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN ARABS' CAUSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTIONS CONFIRMING THEIR NATIONAL RIGHTS..." COLUMN CLAIMED ISRAEL WOULD BE LOSER IF IT WERE FORCED TO WITHDRAW AND RECOGNIZE PALESTINIAN STATE AND NATIONAL RIGHTS SINCE THIS WOULD FORCE IT "ABANDON DREAMS OF CARRYING OUT ZIONIST, EXPANSIONIST AMBITIONS." DECLARED ISRAEL WOULD ALSO LOSE IF IT REJECTED UN RESOLUTIONS AND DISREGARDED WILL OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. SUCH AN EVENTUALITY WOULD GIVE ARABS RIGHT TO USE FORCE IN EYES OF WORLD PUBLIC OPINION.
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DAMASC00244
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770012-1042
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770160/aaaacahj.tel
Line Count: 115
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f3fe2edb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3619714
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 12
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f3fe2edb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009